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SUBJECT: BLACK HEBREW ARTICLES IN JERUSALEM POST (111)

REF: TEL AVIV 16500

FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF THE THIRD JOAN BOUSTEN ARTICLE ON
THE BLACK HEBREWS WHICH APPEARED IN THE JERUSALEM POST ON
MONDAY, OCTOBER 13, 1980:

QUOTE

'LOCK-OUT' STRATEGY AGAINST BLACK HEBREWS.
"IF (INTERIOR MINISTER YOSEF BURG) HAS STILL NOT MADE A
DECISION ABOUT THE BLACK HEBREWS BY THE TIME THE KNESSET
RECONVENES, WE MEMBERS OF THE KNESSET (INTERIOR COMMITTEE)
WILL BEGIN TO PUSH HIM. HE TENDS TO PROCRASTINATE AND THIS
MATTER CANNOT GO UNATTENDED ANY LONGER. THE CITIZENS OF
DIMONA AND ARAD HAVE ALREADY BEGUN TO TAKE THE LAW INTO
THEIR OWN HANDS." MK TAMAR ESHEL.

LATE ONE NIGHT RECENTLY, 11 COUPLES IN THEIR LATE 20'S AND
EARLY 30'S GATHERED IN THE BASEMENT BOMB SHELTER OF THEIR
ARAD HIGH-RISE FOR AN EMERGENCY MEETING OF THE RESIDENTS
COMMITTEE. THE AGENDA: THE DECLARED INTENTION OF THE OWNER
OF THE BUILDING'S 12TH FLAT TO SELL THE FLAT TO THE BLACK
HEBREWS.

"I'M NOT A RACIST," SAID ONE APARTMENT OWNER. "I DON'T CARE
IF I HAVE A BLACK FAMILY AS NEIGHBOURS."

"I'M NOT A RACIST EITHER," DECLARED RONI WEINBERGER,
COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN. "BUT THE FLAT ISN'T BEING SOLD TO A
FAMILY, IT IS BEING SOLD TO A CULT. IN DIMONA, IN MITZPE
RAMON, HERE IN ARAD - WHENEVER THEY GET AN APARTMENT - THEY
MOVE IN 20, 30, 40 PEOPLE. DO YOU KNOW WHAT THAT DOES TO
THE PLUMBING? TO THE QUALITY OF LIFE? THEY MAKE A LOT OF
NOISE. THEY STORE THEIR STUFF ON THE STAIRWELLS. DAY AND
NIGHT THE HALLWAYS ARE FULL OF BLACK HEBREWS BECAUSE THERE
IS NOT ENOUGH ROOM IN THE APARTMENT FOR SO MANY TO SLEEP."
"WORSE, THEY ARE A HOSTILE ELEMENT, ANTI-ISRAEL, ANTI-SEMI-
TIC AND ANTI-WHITE," SAID SHRAGA PESACH, A BIBLE TEACHER
AT THE LOCAL HIGH SCHOOL. A MEMBER OF THE ARAD COMMITTEE
TO EXPEL THE BLACK HEBREWS FROM ISRAEL, PESACH BRIEFLY
DESCRIBED THE CULT'S BELIEF THAT THEY ARE THE TRUE ISRAEL-
ITES WHILE THE JEWS ARE IMPOSTERS. HE CITED EXAMPLES OF
HOSTILE COMMENTS SOME OF ARAD'S 4,000 BLACK HEBREWS HAVE
MADE TO SOME OF ARAD'S 13,000 JEWS, AS WELL AS ANTI-
SEMITIC "LESSONS" BLACK HEBREW ADULTS HAD BEEN OVERHEARD
TEACHING THEIR CHILDREN IN THE CULT'S LOCAL SCHOOL.

"THE GLASS COMMITTEE HAS RECOMMENDED THAT THEY BE GIVEN A
SETTLEMENT," SAID PESACH. "WE OPPOSE THAT. WE THINK EACH
COUNTRY HAS THE RIGHT TO DECIDE WHO WILL LIVE IN THAT
COUNTRY, AND WE DON'T WANT CITIZENS FORCED ON US. THEY ARE
HERE ILLEGALLY; THEY SHOULD BE SENT BACK TO THE U.S. WE ARE
ENCOURAGING EVERYONE IN THIS TOWN TO STOP RENTING TO THEM,
AND WE'VE BEEN VERY SUCCESSFUL. SO NOW THEY ARE TRYING TO

BUY.

"LAST WEEK THEY OFFERED 142,000 FOR A FLAT WORTH MUCH LESS.
WE CONVINCED THE OWNER NOT TO SELL. IF HE HAD, EVERYTHING
HIS NEIGHBOURS HAD INVESTED WOULD HAVE BEEN LOST. SO THEY
ARE TRYING TO BUY ONE OF YOUR FLATS. IF YOU ALLOW THE SALE
TO GO THROUGH, NO ONE WILL BE WILLING TO BUY FROM YOU LATER
AT THE MARKET VALUE."

THE YOUNG COUPLES, MOST OF WHOM HAD TAKEN PERSONAL LOANS
TO BUY THEIR APARTMENTS AND WERE ALSO PAYING OFF LARGE,
LINKED HOUSING MORTGAGES, WINCED. IF THE EXPERIENCE OF
OTHER ARAD RESIDENTS WHO RENTED FLATS TO BLACK HEBREWS
SERVED AS A YARDSTICK, THE FLATS WORTH 15140,000 TODAY
WOULD SOON BE WORTH NO MORE THAN 1570,000.

WEINBERGER HAD SPENT THE DAY STUDYING THE TENANTS LEGAL
RIGHTS.

"THE LAW IS ON THE SIDE OF THE BLACK HEBREWS," HE ANNOUN-
CED. "A FEW OF THEM HAVE IDENTITY CARDS. THEY THEREFORE
HAVE THE RIGHT TO BUY AND MOVE IN AS MANY PEOPLE AS THEY
PLEASE. THEY ARE OFFERING YOSHI 1540,000 MORE THAN THE
FLAT IS WORTH. ALL WE CAN DO IS TRY TO CONVINCE HIM NOT
TO SELL FOR OUR SAKE. AND WE CAN NOTIFY THE BLACK HEBREWS'
LEADER, BEN-AMI CARTER, THAT IF THEY BUY THEY WILL NOT BE
PERMITTED TO MOVE IN. WE WILL PUT UP AN IRON GATE AT THE
BUILDING'S ENTRANCE AND POST A 24-HOUR GUARD."
PLANS TO USE THE "LOCK-OUT" STRATEGY - BASED ON TACTICS
FIRST USED THE PREVIOUS MONTH BY THE DIMONA COMMITTEE -
PROVED SUCCESSFUL AND THE SALE OF THE FLAT NEVER MATERIALIZED.
IN FACT, ALL RECENT ATTEMPTS BY THE BLACK HEBREWS TO BUY OR
RENT IN ARAD HAVE FAILED ABYSMALLY. AND THE GROUP OF LOCALS



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ACTIVELY DEDICATED TO EXPELLING THE CULT FROM BOTH ARAD AND ISRAEL, HAS MUSHROOMED IN SIZE. FOR 11 YEARS VIRTUALLY A ONE-MAN SHOW, TODAY ARAD BOASTS A WELL-ORGANIZED AND WELL-FINANCED ORGANIZATION HEADED BY IMMIGRANTS AND SABRAS, MANY OF THEM RESPECTED PROFESSIONALS. LIKE SHRAGA PESACH, THEY ARE DEDICATED TO EXPOSING THE BLACK HEBREWS AS A CULT WITH QUESTIONABLE VALUES AND PRACTICES WHICH HAS FORCED ITSELF UPON THE PEOPLE AND GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL. THEY ARE COMMITTED TO WRITING LETTERS, DEMONSTRATING, PICKETING, AND - IF NECESSARY - BREAKING LAWS THEY BELIEVE INAPPLICABLE TO THE SITUATION.

THE ARAD COMMITTEE HAS TAKEN UNDER ITS WING A FLEDGLING CITIZENS GROUP FROM NEARBY MITZPE RAMON. IN PREVIOUS YEARS RESIDENTS OF THE VIRTUAL GHOST TOWN WERE NOT UNHAPPY WHEN THE CULT BEGAN RENTING APARTMENTS. TODAY THEIR PRESENCE MEANS TURNING AWAY THE NUMEROUS ISRAELI FAMILIES ATTACHED TO THE NEW AIRFORCE BASES IN THE NEGEV WHO ARE WILLING TO SETTLE IN THE TOWN, A POPULATION MITZPE RAMON IS DESPERATE TO ABSORB.

IT IS IN DIMONA, HOWEVER, WHERE THE MAJORITY OF THIS COUNTRY'S BLACK HEBREWS LIVE, THAT THE JEWS HAVE OPTED FOR WHAT BORDERS ON CIVIL REVOLUTION. ANGERED BECAUSE THE INTERIOR MINISTRY, POLICE AND MUNICIPALITY HAVE CONSISTENTLY IGNORED THEIR COMPLAINTS, CONVINCED THAT NOTHING HAPPENS IN THIS COUNTRY IF THE AGGRIEVED CITIZENS DON'T SHOUT, DEMONSTRATE AND MAKE HEADLINES IN THE NEWSPAPERS, RESIDENTS OF THE 1098 BLOCK DECIDED THIS YEAR TO DO MORE THAN WRITE POLITE LETTERS AND APPEAL TO THE SUPREME COURT. WHEN THEY LEARNED THAT A FLAT IN THEIR BUILDING HAD BEEN RENTED TO THE CULT, THEY ERECTED AN IRON GATE AT THE ENTRANCE. ALTHOUGH THE POLICE AND TOWN MAYOR, MK JACQUES AMIR, WARNED FAMILIES THEY WOULD BE JAILED FOR PREVENTING THE BLACK HEBREWS FROM MOVING IN, THE JEWS STOOD THEIR GROUND.

"WE HAD NEVER DEFIED THE AUTHORITIES BEFORE," SAID FRUMA PLATNER, A MEMBER OF THE DIMONA CITIZENS COMMITTEE. "TO OUR SURPRISE, THE TACTICS WORKED. AND WHEN OTHER DIMONANS SAW WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU TAKE AN AGGRESSIVE ATTITUDE, THEY TOO BEGAN PUTTING UP IRON GATES. WE SHOULD HAVE DONE THIS YEARS AGO. INSTEAD, WE LET THE GOVERNMENT AND BLACKS PUSH US AROUND, MAKE OUR LIVES NIGHTMARES. WELL, NEVER AGAIN." PLATNER AND HER HUSBAND HANOCH, LIKE THEIR FELLOW COMMITTEE MEMBERS, HAVE COMPLAINED TO THE APPROPRIATE AUTHORITIES ABOUT THE BLACK HEBREWS, THOUGH INITIALLY THEY WELCOMED THE EXOTIC AMERICANS INTO THE NEIGHBOURHOOD. PROBLEMS BEGAN WHEN THE NUMBER OF BLACK HEBREWS INHABITING THE DOZEN FLATS ALLOTTED THEM BY AMIDAR SWELLED TO 20, THEN 30, AND NOW 40. THE OVERCROWDING, IN ADDITION TO THE BLACK HEBREWS USURPING THE LOCAL BOMB SHELTERS, RESULTED IN OVERFLOWING SEWAGE, EXCESSIVE NOISE AND A DECLINE IN PROPERTY VALUES.

THE FREQUENT PLEAS FOR RELIEF, MADE BY RESIDENTS OF THE NIZAHON NEIGHBOURHOOD TO VARIOUS GOVERNMENT BODIES WENT UNANSWERED. IN FACT, THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION ON A HIGH LEVEL OF HOW TO HANDLE THE CULT UNTIL 1977 - NINE YEARS

AFTER THE FIRST BLACK HEBREWS ARRIVED IN ISRAEL, BUT EVEN THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THAT INTRA-MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE WERE IGNORED BY THE INTERIOR MINISTRY, THE ONLY GOVERNMENT BODY WHICH HAD THE POWER TO EITHER EXPEL THE AMERICANS FROM THE COUNTRY OR MAKE THEM LEGAL RESIDENTS.

FINALLY IN MAY, 1978, CONVINCED THAT BY DOING NOTHING FOR SO LONG THE GOVERNMENT HAD CROSSED THE LINE BETWEEN BENIGN NEGLECT AND IRRESPONSIBILITY, THE DIMONA CITIZENS COMMITTEE FILED SUIT IN THE SUPREME COURT AGAINST THE MINISTERS OF HEALTH, INTERIOR AND EDUCATION AS WELL AS THE DIMONA MUNICIPALITY. THE SUPREME COURT, INSTEAD OF ACTING ON THE SUIT, SUGGESTED THAT INTERIOR MINISTER YOSEF BURG ESTABLISH A FACT-FINDING COMMITTEE TO LOOK INTO THE MATTER AND RECOMMEND WITHIN TWO MONTHS THE STEPS THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD TAKE. TWENTY MONTHS LATER, IN JUNE, 1980, THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE, MK DAVID , PRESENTED HIS REPORT.

BURG ANNOUNCED THAT BE A CABINET DISCUSSION OF THE RECOMMENDATION. TENT AND PERMANENT RESIDENCE IN EXCHANGE FOR A HE CULT WOULD ERING IN NO NEW MEMBERS. THE KNESSET PERIOR COMMITTEE STUDIED THE PROBLEM IN DEPTH AND VISITED DIMONA. IN EARLY SEPTEMBER THERE WAS A "HIGH LEVEL" MEETING ABOUT THE REPORT, BUT TO DATE, NO DECISIONS HAVE BEEN MADE.

"SO WHEN THE WOMAN WHO OWNS AN EMPTY FLAT IN THIS BLOCK DECIDED TO RENT TO THE CULT, WE DECIDED TO TAKE ACTION," SAID PLATNER. "WHO KNOWS WHEN THE GOVERNMENT WILL ACT ON THE GLASS RECOMMENDATIONS? OR IF THE GOVERNMENT WILL ACT AT ALL?

"WE DO NOT WANT TO SUBJECT OUR CHILDREN TO WHAT OTHER

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LIVE IN THE SAME BUILDING AS THE BLACK HEBREWS. AS IT IS, MY TEENAGE DAUGHTER CAN'T COME AND GO FREELY LIKE HER FRIENDS. I DON'T WANT HER COMING HOME AT NINE OR 10 IN THE EVENING AND HAVING TO WALK THROUGH A CROWD OF ADULT MALES FROM THAT GROUP. WORSE, IF SHE LIVES IN THE SAME BUILDING AS THE BLACK HEBREWS, SHE COULD HAVE THE EXPERIENCE OF ANOTHER TEENAGER FROM THIS NEIGHBOURHOOD. HE CAME HOME LATE ONE NIGHT AND FOUND A BLACK COUPLE ENGAGED IN SEX ON THE STAIRWAY!"

"EVERYONE WARNED US NOT TO TAKE THE LAW INTO OUR HANDS. THANK GOD, WE DIDN'T LISTEN. IF WE HAD, WE'D BE LIVING WITH THE BLACK HEBREWS RIGHT NOW. THE SUPREME COURT CASE WE FILED LAST MONTH WAS REJECTED. THE JUDGES REFERRED US BACK TO FURQ!"

"NOW THAT WE'VE CHANGED OUR TACK AND BECOME AGGRESSIVE, WE'VE GOTTEN RESULTS. THIS IS AFTER YEARS OF BEING CALLED RACISTS FOR OBJECTING TO THE SICK CULT, OF BEING IGNORED BY THE POLICE AND GOVERNMENT. DO YOU KNOW THAT THERE WERE RESIDENTS OF OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD SO INTIMIDATED BY THE BLACK HEBREWS THAT THEY WERE "AFRAID" TO SIGN OUR PETITIONS? WHOSE COUNTRY IS THIS ANYHOW?"

THE BLACK HEBREWS HAVE YET TO MOVE INTO THEIR APARTMENT IN THE 1096 BLOCK. IN FACT, THEY ARE CURRENTLY VACATING ALL OF THE FLATS THEY OCCUPY IN THE HIZAHON NEIGHBOURHOOD. AT THE SUGGESTION OF THE CITIZENS COMMITTEE, THE DIMONA MUNICIPALITY HAS ARRANGED FOR BEN-AMI CARTER TO HOUSE HIS FLOCK IN ONE OF THE CITY'S ABSORPTION CENTRES.

"THE GOVERNMENT KEPT TELLING US THEY COULDN'T GET THE BLACK HEBREWS OUT OF HERE UNTIL THEY HAD FOUND A 'PERMANENT SOLUTION,'" SAID A COMMITTEE MEMBER. "THAT COULD TAKE YEARS. SO WE TOOK THE INITIATIVE OF FINDING A 'TEMPORARY' SOLUTION."

RELOCATING THE CULT IN THE 74-FLAT ABSORPTION CENTRE DOES NOT SIGNAL AN END TO THE CITIZENS COMMITTEE'S BATTLES. HOWEVER, AT THE MOMENT THEY ARE BRAINSTORMING NEW WAYS TO "CONFRONT" THE MUNICIPALITY ON THE ISSUE. DIMONANS CLAIM THAT WHEN MAYOR AHIR ACCEPTED THEIR "TEMPORARY" SOLUTION, HE ALSO COMMITTED HIMSELF TO FIRST SECURING AN ACCURATE AND COMPLETE LIST OF ALL OF THE CULT MEMBERS LEGAL AMERICAN NAMES, AS WELL AS THEIR FINGERPRINTS. AT PRESENT, NEITHER THE INTERIOR MINISTRY, THE POLICE OR THE MUNICIPALITY KNOW HOW MANY BLACK HEBREWS LIVE IN DIMONA OR WHO THEY ARE. "BUT CARTER WAS ALLOWED TO SIGN THE LEASE WITHOUT FULFILLING THESE CONDITIONS," SAID PLATNER. "WE WON'T STAND FOR THAT. ONCE THE CULT IS SETTLED IN AT THE ABSORPTION CENTRE, WE'LL HAVE NO WAY OF GETTING THEM TO IDENTIFY THEMSELVES. LAST WEEK WE SUPPORTED A ONE-DAY WARNING STRIKE CALLED BY PARENTS OF THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL WHICH ADJOINS THE ABSORPTION CENTRE. THIS WEEK...?"

THE DIMONA CITIZENS COMMITTEE HAS ALSO SERVED NOTICE OF

THEIR LONG-RANGE GOALS TO ALL OFFICIAL BODIES CHARGED WITH FINDING A SOLUTION TO THE BLACK HEBREW "PROBLEM".

"JUST MOVING THE BLACK HEBREWS OUT OF THE HIZAHON NEIGHBOURHOOD IS NOT ENOUGH," SAID A SPOKESMAN. THAT WILL PROVIDE RELIEF TO SOME CITIZENS OF DIMONA, BUT NOT TO THE STATE. WE WANT THEM OUT OF THIS COUNTRY, AND WE WILL CONTINUE TO FIGHT AGGRESSIVELY UNTIL ACTION IS TAKEN. ONE RESULT OF OUR NEW CAMPAIGN IS THAT MANY DIMONANS HAVE COME FORTH WITH THEIR HORROR STORIES ABOUT THE CULT, STORIES THEY WERE PREVIOUSLY AFRAID TO TELL ANYONE. MORE THAN EVER, WE REALIZE THAT WE ARE DEALING WITH A VERY SICK GROUP. ISOLATING THEM ON A MOSHAV IS NOT AN ANSWER, AND WE INTEND TO MAKE THE GOVERNMENT REALIZE THIS, WHETHER IT WANTS TO OR NOT."

(THIS IS THE THIRD OF A SERIES OF ARTICLES.) LEWIS

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